



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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FUGITIVE ARMS SMUGGLER WANTED BY MEXICAN GOVERNMENT APPREHENDED IN TUCSON

TUCSON – A U.S. Citizen wanted by Mexican authorities for arms smuggling is being held in federal custody without bond following his arrest late last week by United States Marshals in Tucson. U.S. Marshals arrested Braulio Eloy Villegas Borquez on Friday May 18 on charges of smuggling arms and munitions into Sonora, Mexico, which included assault and other rifles, a machine gun, clips and ammunition. Villegas Borquez is being held pending his extradition to Mexico to face the charges lodged by the Mexican government.

The complaint, based on the Mexican extradition request, reveals that Villegas Borquez was driving a vehicle southbound through the Naco, Ariz. port of entry on November 26, 2005. He crossed from Naco, Ariz. into Naco, Sonora, Mexico, in the “nothing to declare” lane. Mexican customs officials in Naco, Sonora searched the trunk of the vehicle and found weapons concealed in a guitar case, a backpack, and cardboard boxes. Specifically, Mexican customs officials found two AK-47 (7.62 x 39mm) assault rifles, two CN-ROMARM DUGIR (7.62 x 39mm) caliber rifles of Romanian manufacture; a Master Piece Arms 45-caliber machine gun; two BFI (7.62 x 39mm) long rifle clips; two BFI (7.62 x 39mm) short rifle clips; one BFI 223-caliber rifle clip; a Kay 223-caliber rifle clip; two 45-caliber machine gun clips; and 47 Speer 45-caliber loaded automatic clips. Villegas Borquez could not verify that he was lawfully entitled to import or possess the weapons.

At some point, authorities heard the sound of a gunshot. A white Ford pick up truck drove to the customs office, and Villegas Borquez ran out of the office, jumped into that truck, and escaped into Mexico.

On December 23, 2005, a warrant was issued in Sonora, Mexico for the arrest of Villegas Borquez, for smuggling firearms and munitions into Mexico, specifically, “smuggling into national territory of firearms and munition reserved for the use of the Mexican Army, Navy, and Air Force.” Arms smuggling is an extraditable offense under Article 2, Appendix Item 19, of the Extradition Treaty between the United States and Mexico.

The extradition is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Christina M. Cabanillas, on behalf of the Mexican government, with the assistance of the United States Marshals Service.

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